

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 OIC-02 ACDA-12 AGRE-00
AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
DLOS-09 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 SOE-02
DOE-15 FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-10 INT-05 IO-14
JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02 OMB-01 PA-02
PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20 /169 W
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R 302046Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7246
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USINT HAVANA

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 03778

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, FAO
SUBJECT: WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERY COMMISSION
(WECAFC) SECOND SESSION

REF: A. PANAMA 3524, B. PANAMA 3581, C. STATE 131914,
D. PANAMA 3598, E. PANAMA 3702, F. STATE 129931,
G. CARACAS 1634, H. PANAMA 3492

1. SUMMARY: WECAFC SECOND SESSION CONSIDERED A NUMBER OF ISSUES WHICH COULD SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT U.S. FISHERY INTERESTS. THE POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF WECAFC TO THE PACIFIC AND THE STRONG LEADERSHIP ROLE PLAYED BY THE CUBAN DELEGATION ARE OF SPECIAL CONCERN. THE U.S. DELEGATION BELIEVES THAT THESE FACTORS MAY IMPAIR THE ABILITY OF THE COMMISSION TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS WITHOUT NEGATIVELY AFFECTING U.S. FISHERY INTERESTS.

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2. THE SECOND SESSION OF WECAFC WAS HELD IN PANAMA CITY FROM MAY 22-26, 1978. DELEGATIONS FROM 15 OF THE 22 MEMBER COUNTRIES ATTENDED. OBSERVERS FROM CANADA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ALSO ATTENDED.

3. AFTER A BRIEF STATEMENT BY CUBAN VICE-FISHERIES

MINISTER OLTUSKI, WHO SERVED AS THE COMMISSION'S CHAIRMAN, THE PANAMANIAN MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, JULIO E. SOSA, FORMALLY OPENED THE SESSION. THE TONE OF THE MEETING WAS SET BY SOSA WHO, AFTER REAFFIRMING PANAMA'S DECLARATION OF A 200-MILE LIMIT, STATED THAT EXTENDED NATIONAL FISHING ZONES NEED ONLY "CONCERN THOSE COUNTRIES, WHICH RELYING ON THEIR MILITARY STRENGTH, HAVE ALWAYS UNILATERALLY EXPLOITED THE RESOURCES OF WEAK COUNTRIES..." SOSA ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE PROLIFERATION OF AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS OFFERING FISHERIES ASSISTANCE IN THE WECAFC AREA ACTS TO HELP "THOSE WHO SEEING THEIR FISHERY INTERESTS THREATENED, DO NOT WISH WECAFC TO BE SUCCESSFUL," (PARA 6). THE COMMISSION WAS ALSO ADDRESSED BY FAO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR FISHERIES, H. WATZINGER, WHO AFTER REVIEWING FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE WECAFC REGION, SUGGESTED THAT THE COMMISSION GIVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THE POSSIBLE MODIFICATION OF ITS STATUTES TO PROVIDE FOR MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY. WATZINGER ALSO STRESSED WECAFC'S POTENTIAL USEFULNESS TO COORDINATE MULTILATERAL ACTION ON SHARED STOCKS (PARA 8).

4. STATE OF THE STOCKS: THE COMMISSION ENDORSED THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE WECAFC WORKING PARTY ON ASSESSMENT OF FISH RESOURCES AND THE WORKING PARTY ON STOCK ASSESSMENT OF SHRIMP AND LOBSTER RESOURCES WITH ONLY MINOR RESERVATIONS. IT WAS FELT THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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THERE WAS A PARTICULAR NEED FOR COOPERATION ON STOCKS, THE DISTRIBUTION OF WHICH EXTENDS ACROSS NATIONAL ECONOMIC ZONES. THE COMMISSION STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE PLANS FOR A MEETING OF A SPECIAL WORKING GROUP TO ANALYZE AND DISCUSS THE SHRIMP RESOURCES OF THE GUIANAS-BRAZIL AREA.

5. FISHERY STATISTICS: THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE WECAFC WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS TO EXTEND THE CURRENT WECAFC AREA SOUTHWARD TO TEN DEGREES SOUTH SO AS TO MAKE THE WECAFC AREA A MORE COHERENT BIOLOGICAL UNIT. THE COMMISSION ALSO ACCEPTED THE WORKING PARTY'S PROPOSALS FOR FAO STATISTICAL AREA 31 WITH ONLY SLIGHT MODIFICATION. THE CUBAN PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE WECAFC AREA INTO THE PACIFIC (135 DEGREES WEST) WAS DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH. ALTHOUGH THE U.S. DELEGATION BROUGHT UP A NUMBER OF BIOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL OBJECTIONS (REFS A, B, AND C), A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS WERE FAVORABLY DESPOSED TO THE PROPOSAL. THE DELEGATION WILL PREPARE A DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE DEBATE. THE CUBAN DELEGATION STRESSED THAT THE REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL WERE NOT BIOLOGICAL, BUT WERE DESIGNED TO HELP RESOLVE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. THE COM-

MISSION DECIDED TO ASK THE FAO SECRETARIAT TO STUDY THE PROPOSAL, THE ANALYSIS OF WHICH, WILL BE BASED ON A QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO WECAFC MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE COMMISSION REQUESTED THAT THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE AVAILABLE AT LEAST SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION.

6. WECAF PROJECT: THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WECAF PROJECT (REF D). THE U.S. DELEGATION SUGGESTED THAT ONE POINT NOT GIVEN ADEQUATE ATTENTION IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT WAS THE NEED TO EXAMINE AND IMPROVE THE PRESENT METHODS OF MARKETING THE CATCH OF ARTISANAL FISHERMEN. THE PRIMARY FACTOR LIMITING THE CATCH OF THESE
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FISHERMEN IS THE LACK OF AN ADEQUATE MARKETING STRUCTURE.

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7. RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES: THE COMMISSION CONSIDERED WECAFC'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES IN THE AREA CONCERNED

WITH FISHERIES. PARTICULAR ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO THE LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM, SELA (REF E) AND THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARIBBEAN AND ADJACENT REGIONS, IOCARIBE. THE PANAMANIAN DELEGATE COMPLAINED OF THE DUPLICATION OF EFFORT BY THE VARIOUS AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS OFFERING FISHERIES AID. HE SUGGESTED THAT THIS WAS WASTEFUL OR PERHAPS EVEN AN IMPEDIMENT TO FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT. THE CUBAN DELEGATE THEN SUGGESTED THAT THE SECRETARIAT IDENTIFY ALL THE AGENCIES INVOLVED, "OR CLAIMING TO BE INVOLVED," WITH FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION. ONCE THE LIST IS COMPILED A MEETING WILL BE ARRANGED AS SOON AFTERWARDS AS POSSIBLE TO COORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES. THE U.S. DELEGATION SUGGESTED THAT THE COMMISSION LOOK INTO THE DEPLETION OF HAWKSBILL TURTLE STOCKS AS THIS SPECIES, IF PROPERLY MANAGED, COULD BE AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE

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TO ARTISANAL FISHERMEN.

8. FISHERY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: THE COMMISSION HELD A LENGTHY INFORMAL SEMINAR ON FISHERY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION. THE DISCUSSION WAS DIVIDED INTO THREE SUBJECTS: (A) RESOURCE LEVEL, (B) STATE OF FISHERIES AND (C) DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES. NO AGREED STATEMENT BY THE COMMISSION WAS PREPARED ON THE SEMINAR, BUT A NUMBER OF IMPORT DECISIONS WERE TAKEN ON TRAINING. THE SECRETARIAT WAS REQUESTED TO CONSULT ALL MEMBERS OF WECAFC OFFERING FISHERY-RELATED SCHOLARSHIPS TO OBTAIN FURTHER DETAILS. THE COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED THE OFFER MADE BY CUBA TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER IN THAT COUNTRY. THE COMMISSION ALSO NOTED THE CREATION IN CUBA OF A CENTER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERY PRODUCTS AND AN OFFER BY THE CUBA DELEGATION TO MAKE THE SERVICES OF THE CENTER AVAILABLE TO MEMBER COUNTRIES.

9. EFFECTS OF EXTENDED JURISDICTION: THE COMMISSION REVIEWED THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW REGIME OF THE SEA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF FISHERY RESOURCES IN THE REGION AND SUGGESTED THAT A REGIONAL SEMINAR ON THAT SUBJECT BE ORGANIZED. FAO WAS REQUESTED TO SEEK THE NECESSARY FUNDS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SUCH A SEMINAR COULD BE FUNDED BY THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY WHICH HAS FUNDED SIMILAR SEMINARS IN OTHER AREAS. THE COMMISSION ALSO REQUESTED THAT FAO IDENTIFY THE SHARED FISHERY RESOURCES OF THE REGION. FINALLY, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDED THAT ITS STATUTES BE AMENDED TO ALLOW INVOLVEMENT IN MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION. A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS INDICATED THEIR CONCERN THAT WECAFC'S MANAGEMENT ROLE SHOULD BE STRICTLY ADVISORY AT THE REQUEST OF MEMBER GOVERNMENTS. DURING THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS AGENDA ITEM, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EEC) EX-

PLAINED THAT GIVEN THE EEC ROLE IN FRENCH GUIANA, THE EEC
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HAD DECIDED TO APPLY FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP IN WECAFC. THE COMMISSION TOOK NOTE OF THE EEC'S APPLICATION AND ASKED THE SECRETARIAT TO STUDY THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS. THE ISSUE OF EEC MEMBERSHIP IN FAO REGIONAL BODIES WILL BE DISCUSSED IN GREATER DETAIL AT THE JUNE 1978 MEETING OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES (COFI).

10. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF WECAFC: THE COMMISSION CONSIDERED A PROPOSAL TO MOVE THE WECAFC SECRETARIAT, WHICH IS NOW IN ROME, TO THE REGION. THE PROPOSAL RECEIVED UNANIMOUS SUPPORT, BUT THE COMMISSION DECIDED TO DELAY THE FINAL DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE JUNE COFI MEETING WHERE THE FUTURE OF FAO REGIONAL FISHERY COMMISSIONS WILL BE DISCUSSED. IF THE COMMISSION DECIDES TO MOVE ITS SECRETARIAT TO THE REGION, A NUMBER OF OFFERS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES. PANAMA AND VENEZUELA INDICATED AN INTEREST IN LOCATING THE SECRETARIAT IN THEIR COUNTRIES (REFS F, G AND H). BOTH DELEGATIONS HAVE PREVIOUSLY CANVASSED VARIOUS DELEGATIONS ON THE SUBJECT. DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE, COLOMBIA ALSO INDICATED AN INTEREST AND THE WECAF SECRETARIAT REMINDED DELEGATES THAT IN 1977 TRINIDAD AND TABAGO HAD REQUESTED THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO LOCATING THE SECRETARIAT IN PORT OF SPAIN. ONCE A MEANS HAS BEEN FOUND TO FINANCE THE WECAFC SECRETARIAT IN THE REGION, THE FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL WILL BE ASKED BY THE COMMISSION TO CONSULT WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES TO DETERMINE THE SITE OF THE SECRETARIAT.

11. OTHER MATTERS: THE COMMISSION APPROVED A TECHNICAL AMENDMENT TO ITS RULES OF PROCEDURES AND REQUESTED THE WECAF PROJECT TO LOOK INTO THIS MATTER AND PREPARE AN INVENTORY OF THE ARTISANAL FISHERIES THAT MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY MARINE POLLUTION. THE COMMISSION ALSO APPROVED THE INCLUSION OF AN AGENDA ITEM ON THE EFFECTS OF MARINE POLLUTION ON ARTISANAL FISHERIES.

12. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: THE COMMISSION ELECTED CUBA IN THE PERSON OF E. OLTUSKI FOR WECAFC CHAIRMAN AND
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PANAMA, IN THE PERSON OF DR. C. ARELLANO LENNOX (DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MARINE RESOURCES), AS FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN. THE REMAINING VICE-CHAIRMEN WERE PANAMA, JAMAICA AND COLOMBIA. MEXICO, BRAZIL, VENEZUELA AND THE UNITED STATES WERE ELECTED TO THE REMAINING POSITIONS ON THE EXECUTIVE

COMMITTEE.

13. THIRD SESSION: THE COMMISSION ACCEPTED A CUBAN
INVITATION TO HOLD THE THIRD SESSION IN HAVANA DURING
MAY 1980.

14. PLEASE PASS TO OES/OFA-STORER; AID - ROEDEL; FSE,
FSW (PARA 4), F12, F4, F51. JORDEN

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